

U.S. Serial No. 09/975,800

refer to uncrosslinked polymers. Applicants refer to "crosslinked polymers" throughout as "hydrogels", which is the subject matter of claims 18-20. Since a further election of uncrosslinked polymers was considered redundant within the context of the disclosure, the earlier "failure" to elect was clearly *bona fide*.

The clarified election above is made with traverse because concurrent examination of crosslinked variants of the elected polymers and copolymers would not be unduly burdensome.

If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conversation could expedite prosecution, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

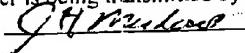


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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I, James H. Meadows, hereby certify that this paper is being transmitted by facsimile to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on the date shown. Signature:  Date: 12/24/03